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Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal God, You are our rock and salvation. You are our high tower, and we shall not be moved. Forgive us when we forget to trust You to order our steps and direct our path.

Lord, thank You for our lawmakers, who seek to fulfill Your purposes in their labors. Give them the wisdom and courage they need to glorify Your Name as they strive always to live worthy of the mercies You daily bestow. May their work be a delight as they make You the only constituent they always seek to please.

Help us all to remember that You know what is best for us; so please have Your way.

We pray in Your strong Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COTTON). The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

FAA REAUTHORIZATION BILL

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I have been pleased to see the progress we have made on the FAA Reauthorization Act, and I appreciate the Senators who have worked to process amendments such as those that bolster airport security. Last evening we processed another set of amendments to help make this good bill an even better one.

One such amendment, offered by Senator FLAKE, would help improve communication between the FAA and local airports in order to provide a greater say for local stakeholders in the management of the airspace near their own airports. This will benefit communities and airports across the country, including at Kentucky's own Louisville airport. I appreciate Senator FLAKE's leadership on this issue and was pleased to see this provision included in the overall bill.

I encourage Members who have ideas they think can strengthen the bill to continue working with the bill managers to move this legislation forward. Let's continue working today to take the next steps in seeing this consumer-friendly FAA reauthorization and airport security bill through to passage.

This bill contains a number of important measures to increase security in our airports and the skies. It also takes more steps to look out for airline passengers. Here is how: It will improve information about seat availability and create a standard for information on fee disclosures. It will require airlines to offer refunds to customers whose bags are lost or who have paid for services they didn't receive. It will also maintain rural access and help improve travel for passengers with disabilities.

There are some who think we should go further and reregulate the airline industry, but we know deregulation has helped make air travel more accessible and more affordable for families and business travelers to get from point A to point B. I know there are

some who think Washington bureaucrats should define what constitutes a reasonable fee, but we want consumers to make that choice for themselves. That is why this bipartisan bill includes the important consumer protection provisions I mentioned earlier. We know this bipartisan legislation is a result of months of dedicated work by Chairman THUNE and his counterpart Senator NELSON. It sets new requirements for making sure customers understand what fees they could face for certain ancillary services, and then, importantly, it holds airlines accountable for delivering to consumers.

This is commonsense legislation. It is the product of Senators working across the aisle on behalf of the American people. Let's continue working together to move forward.

Mr. REID. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. REID. Mr. President, last Thursday the senior Senator from Iowa came to the floor to declare that he is feeling no pressure in blocking President Obama's Supreme Court nominee, Judge Merrick Garland. However, Senator GRASSLEY's actions paint a far different picture.

On Monday the chairman of the Judiciary Committee took to the Des

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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